THE MANITOBA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
LA COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE DU MANITOBA

connections

Equality of Opportunity and Freedom from Discrimination

City offers walk-up yard waste removal for persons with disabilities

The City of Winnipeg has adopted a new Policy that allows people with disabilities who are unable to transport their yard waste to the curb, another option.

The new policy was spurred by a human rights complaint to the Manitoba Human Rights Commission that alleged that the City was discriminating against an individual by not accommodating her disability-related needs.

The Policy will create a new process that allows individuals to apply for yard-waste removal services on providing medical support for the need for the service and if they can show that there is no other individual at their residence who can assist with transporting yard waste the curb. It also is consistent with existing City policy for walk-up retrieval of recycling and garbage bins for individuals with disabilities.

(continued on next page)

Marilyn Hendzel poses outside her home in Winnipeg.

The Rights Connection

By Isha Khan, Executive Director

The 12th annual conference of the Manitoba Council of Administrative Tribunals brought together staff and Board members of almost 30 tribunals for a full day of learning and sharing best practices.

Plenary speaker, Michael Gottheil, Chair of the Social Justice Tribunals of Ontario spoke about Tribunal Excellence and urged us to define what that means and then to develop a plan to achieve it. The afternoon plenary panel was stacked with decision-making experts including Justice Croft, Chief Adjudicator of the Human Rights Adjudication Panel, Sherri Walsh, our Commissioner, Diane Dwarka and others.

As always, the conference provided an opportunity to exchange ideas with other tribunals to better serve the public, whether it comes to how to train new Board members, utilize interpretation services, or accommodate mental health needs in our processes.

The increasing deference given by the Courts to administrative decision making by tribunals who have the expertise to interpret their own enabling legislation, was acknowledged and discussed- reminding the Commission of the importance of its mandate to enforce *The Human Rights Code* and educate the public about *The Code* but also general human rights principles.

(continued from page 1)

"We are pleased to be able to provide this new service as we know it will benefit individuals for whom the curb-side pick-up was a barrier, either because of temporary circumstances or because of a permanent disability," said City Councillor Brian Mayes, Chair of the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment.

Complaints based on disability continue to rank highest in the range of discrimination complaints made to the Commission under The Human Rights Code. "Any time the resolution of a complaint results in making changes to a system that may have been unintentionally creating barriers for individuals with disabilities, we are closer to creating equality for all Manitobans", said Isha Khan, Executive Director of the Commission.

Marilyn Hendzel, who until now has relied on the generosity of her neighbours who have been transporting her yard waste to the curb, made the initial complaint to the Commission. "For people who live with disabilities, a change like this can have a profound effect on the way we live and confirms that we are indeed seen as equals among other Winnipeg home owners".

Details regarding the new policy and a start date for the service will be available on Winnipeg.ca or by contacting 311, open 24 hours every day, by phone at 311 or by email at 311@winnipeg.ca.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

Civil rights activist Angela Davis inspires Winnipeggers

Angela Davis, a well known, American human rights activist was warmly received by Winnipeggers of all ages on May 6.

An iconic figure in the civil rights movement, academic and writer, Davis was invited to speak at the Knox United Church by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba, Black Space and Queer People of Colour on "Race, Resistance and Revolution: Freedom is a Constant Struggle".

The fierceness of her youthful days was tempered with the wisdom that experience brings. In her speech she noted that colonization provided the ground upon which Canada and the US were developed, "We recognize the extent to which oppression of the Aboriginal population and the enslavement of Blacks provide the bedrock of these societies".

She encouraged the audience to become aware of our individual privileges and to use our privileges to help dismantle discrimination and shift the ground of racism.

We are hiring.

See: https://jobsearch.gov.mb.ca/search.action